ments to attest educational documents. However, no proposal for extending attestation by Ministry of External Affairs to the States is under consideration.

Implementation of common rates under 'One India' Programme

†*179. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to do away with the criteria of distance to implement the common rates by removing the Local and STD rates under 'One India' programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) to (c) While Government is working towards One India Call Rate, the proposed measure is at initial stage. No time-frame can be fixed for the same for its introduction.

Employment exchanges in Nagaland

*180. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of jobless persons registered with employment exchanges in the State of Nagaland;

(b) the action taken by Government to provide employment to these persons in the future; and

(c) whether Government propose to provide special grants to the States for youth of NER to give employment allowance to the unemployed?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) Number of jobseekers, all of whom are not necessarily unemployed, registered with the employment exchanges in the State of Nagaland as on April 2005 were 0.46 lakh.

(b) Government is targeting creation of around 5 crore employment opportunities in the country during the Tenth Plan period. These will help the jobseekers in the State of Nagaland also.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) At present, Ministry of Labour & Employment have no proposal under consideration to provide special grants to the States of North Eastern Region to give unemployment allowance to the unemployed.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Financial assistance to craftsmen and weavers

†1109. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the target has been fixed by Government to give financial assistance to craftsmen and weavers under the Self Employment Credit Card Scheme; and

(b) if so, the number of craftsmen and weavers who have been benefited, so far under this scheme, year-wise and State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD): (a) A target of issuing one lakh Artisan Credit Cards (ACC) to handicraft artisans has been fixed to provide them easier access to bank finance. Weavers are covered under the Swarojgar Credit Card (SCC) Scheme being implemented by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). The SCC Scheme covers *inter alia* vocations like fishermen, self-employed persons, self help groups (SHGs) and other micro-entrepreneurs. No specific target has, however, been fixed for weavers.

(b) So far 33,285 ACCs have been issued to artisans since the inception of the scheme in 2003-04, State-wise details of which are not available. Further, 1.79 lakh SCCs have been issued by various banks from September 2003 to 31 March 2005. State-wise details of SCCs issued to craftsmen and weavers separately are not available.

ARIs under REGP in NER

1110. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have established agro and rural industries in North-Eastern Region with special reference to Assam under the Rural Employment Generation Programme during the last three years;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.